



CHAPTER 28

MRS. WHITEFOOT DECIDES ON A HOME



When Mrs. Mouse makes up her mind

Then Mr. Mouse best get behind.

—Whitefoot.

Whitefoot the Woodmouse was very proud of his home. He showed it as he led Mrs. Whitefoot there. He felt sure that she would say at once that that would be the place for them to live. You remember that it was high up in a tall, dead stub and had once been the home of Timmy the Flying Squirrel.

“There, my dear, what do you think of that?” said Whitefoot proudly as they reached the little round doorway.

Mrs. Whitefoot said nothing, but at once went inside. She was gone what seemed a long time to Whitefoot, anxiously waiting outside. You see, Mrs. Whitefoot is a very thorough small person, and she was examining the inside of that house from top to bottom. At last she appeared at the doorway.

“Don’t you think this is a splendid house?” asked Whitefoot rather timidly.

“It is very good of its kind,” replied Mrs. Whitefoot.

Whitefoot’s heart sank. He didn’t like the tone in which Mrs. Whitefoot had said that.

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“Just what do you mean, my dear?” Whitefoot asked.

“I mean,” replied Mrs. Whitefoot, in a most decided way, “that it is a very good house for winter, but it won’t do at all for summer. That is, it won’t do for me. In the first place it is so high up that if we should have babies, I would worry all the time for fear the darlings would have a bad fall. Besides, I don’t like an inside house for summer. I think, Whitefoot, we must look around and find a new home.”

As she spoke Mrs. Whitefoot was already starting down the stub. Whitefoot followed.

“All right, my dear, all right,” said he meekly. “You know best. This seems to me like a very fine home, but of course, if you don’t like it we’ll look for another.”

Mrs. Whitefoot said nothing, but led the way down the tree with Whitefoot meekly following. Then began a patient search all about. Mrs. Whitefoot appeared to know just what she wanted and turned up her nose at several places Whitefoot thought would make fine homes. She hardly glanced at a fine hollow log Whitefoot found. She merely poked her nose in at a splendid hole beneath the roots of an old stump. Whitefoot began to grow tired from running about and climbing stumps and trees and bushes.

He stopped to rest and lost sight of Mrs. Whitefoot. A moment later he heard her calling excitedly. When he found her, she was up in a small tree, sitting on the edge of an old nest a few feet above the ground. It was a nest that had once belonged to Melody the Wood Thrush. Mrs. Whitefoot was sitting on the edge of it, and her bright eyes snapped with excitement and pleasure.

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"I've found it!" she cried. "I've found it! It is just what I have been looking for."

"Found what?" Whitefoot asked. "I don't see anything but an old nest of Melody's."

"I've found the home we've been looking for, stupid," retorted Mrs. Whitefoot.

Still Whitefoot stared. "I don't see any house," said he.

Mrs. Whitefoot stamped her feet impatiently. "Right here, stupid," said she. "This old nest will make us the finest and safest home that ever was. No one will ever think of looking for us here. We must get busy at once and fix it up."

Even then Whitefoot didn't understand. Always he had lived either in a hole in the ground, or in a hollow stump or tree. How they were to live in that old nest he couldn't see at all.